

# UN troops and police surround Haiti slum

by Haiti Information Project

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UN forces assist puppet regime in violent represison of popular insurrection in Haiti.  
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Haiti Information Project (HIP)

Port au Prince, Haiti (HIP) - UN forces using Armored Personnel Vehicles (APV's) and attack trained dogs are currently taking up positions around the pro-Aristide slum of Bel Air. They are joined by heavily armed units of the Haitian police following a statement by Minister of Justice Bernard Gousse that the U.S.-backed government would give a "muscular response" to opponents of the regime. This comes one day after the Haitian National Police (PNH) and UN officials held meetings to formulate a plan to end armed resistance that broke out after police fired on unarmed demonstrators on September 30th.

The slum of Bel Air has served as a rallying point for recent demonstrations demanding the return of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide. Aristide was ousted on February 29th amid charges he was kidnapped by U.S. Marines and is currently living in the Republic of South Africa. Bel Air has been under a virtual state of siege since September 30th and residents repelled two nighttime raids by the police earlier this week.

A UN helicopter could be seen circling overhead as APV's manned by Brazilian troops took up positions around the slum. Unidentified UN troops could be seen handling what appeared to be special canine units as frightened residents ran for cover. A spokesperson for PNH announced the action involved 200 UN troops with 150 Haitian police and that more than 75 persons have been arrested in Bel Air this morning.

Brazilian President Luis Inacio Lula da Silva met with U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell yesterday where the deteriorating situation in Haiti topped the agenda. Brazil's role in leading the UN mission was recently criticized by representatives of Aristide's Lavalas party. They charged the UN forces did nothing to stop the Haitian police from provoking this latest crisis by firing on unarmed demonstrators on September 30th. Despite the destabilizing role played by the Haitian police, UN Special Representative Juan Gabriel Valdés reiterated "the U.S.-backed UN Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) will continue to work in support of the Haitian police in maintaining public order, thereby helping to ensure the security of Haiti's citizens and respect for the rule of law."

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The Haiti Information Project (HIP) is a non-profit alternative news service providing coverage and analysis of breaking developments in Haiti.

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